

College Night for Senior Parents & Caregivers Recap

Class of 2027 — September 2, 2026

KEY DATES & ACTION ITEMS

Sept. 24, 8:15 am	College Coffee — Informal discussion with college counselors; topic will be Harvard's 2026 "Turning the Tide" report.
Sept. 29, 6:30 pm	Financial Aid 101, Gorelick Family Theater — guest speaker Shannon Amundson, Davidson College.
Ongoing	Seniors should share their essay and activities list with their counselor at least 2 weeks before any deadline.
Ongoing	College Rep Visits — Check BucsNet or Teams for upcoming dates and connect with the reps who might read your apps!
Ongoing	Official score reports vs. self-reporting scores: Check each college's testing policy on their websites, as it varies by school. The College Counseling office cannot send scores on a student's behalf.

A College Admissions State of the Union

- Early Decision is expanding to public flagships (UF, FSU), joining UVA, Michigan, and UConn.
- Some Ivies and other selective schools are reinstating testing requirements, but the large majority of colleges remain test-optional.
- International applications and enrollment are down nationally, alongside a decline in college-going students in the Northeast — not a trend seen in the Southeast.
- Some colleges are dropping supplemental essays — partly to widen access, partly to increase application volume.
- AI is showing up on both sides of the admissions process — in how colleges evaluate applications and how students write them.

Where We Are in the Process at Country Day

- College Application Workshop (8/27): a full day with seniors on Common App, Scoir clean-up, self-reported transcripts (STARS), essays, activities lists, recruitment/portfolio sessions, and inbox management.
- School Profile: in final review, incorporating Making Caring Common (Harvard) best practices. Posting to BucsNet in September, in time for the first Early Action deadlines.
- 1:1 Counselor Meetings: ongoing throughout the fall — during free block, lunch, or before/after school.
- Scoir vs. Common App: Common App is where students apply; Scoir is our internal system for transcripts, recommendations, and tracking. Scoir's Intelligent Match ratings are AI-generated starting points for conversation, not guarantees.
- College Visits: 123 scheduled this fall and counting — view the calendar on BucsNet to see who is coming and when.
- Financial Aid 101 & College Coffees: see action items above.

A Senior Parent & Caregiver Playbook

7 things you can do to support your senior this year, presented by Director of College Counseling Allison Slater Tate:

- **1. Recognize how much has changed:** Today's process looks nothing like it did for most of us. Give your senior grace and acknowledge they are navigating something genuinely more daunting in the age of social media and the internet.
- **2. Understand that stats ≠ outcomes:** Perfect grades and scores don't guarantee results — colleges are shaping a class around institutional need, not just building a ranking of top numbers.
- **3. Manage the college talk:** Seniors talk about this all day. Be the safe space — say less, smile more. (Featuring admissions perspectives from Timothy Fields, Emory University.)
- **4. Know when to use your "stitches face":** It will be OK in the end — if it's not OK, it's not the end. (Featuring Rick Clark, Georgia Tech.)
- **5. Celebrate every win:** Applying is the real work. Treat every acceptance the same.
- **6. Be ready to pivot:** When disappointing news comes, let your senior feel it first — don't rush to fix it. Then pivot together. (Featuring Whitney Soule, University of Pennsylvania.)
- **7. Don't miss this:** This year goes fast. You've given your senior a strong foundation — they need to know that *you* know they'll be OK.

Dr. Danielle Scott: Staying Grounded So Your Child Can Fly

- There are two lasting gifts we give our children: roots and wings — and giving wings doesn't mean weakening the roots.
- "Our understandable instinct to relieve our children's distress can sometimes reduce the very experiences through which confidence develops." — Dr. Anne Marie Albano
- Watch for "the wobble": kids learn to manage emotions not just from what we say, but from what they observe in us and the emotional environment we create.
- Shift from manager to consultant. Before stepping in, ask:
 - Is this dangerous, or just uncomfortable?
 - Whose problem is this to solve?
 - What does my child actually need from me right now?

Full slides and resources are posted on the College Counseling page on BucsNet. Questions? Reach out anytime — we're here to help.